

disclaimer

The following is a google translation of the original interview. We did not read it. So we cannot guarantee for its quality. If there are any doubts how to understand single passages please refer to the original version. We have read it and guarantee for its high intelligence quality.

Pope's apology

Hans Küng

Heretic processes, witch burnings and crusades as well as the dark chapter of hatred of the Jews. 2000 years of church history are also shaped by the bloody misconduct of the church leaders and their followers. As the first pope of church history, John Paul II apologized yesterday for the errors and crimes that were committed in the name of the Catholic faith. The Pope's Mea Culpa is considered a historical gesture by many theologians. Critics, on the other hand, complain that the head of the church failed to specifically apologize for past crimes. Historical gesture of reconciliation or vague confession? We want to talk about this this morning with the Tübingen reform theologian Professor Hans Küng. Good Morning!

Prof. Küng: Good morning Mr. Heinlein.

Heinlein: Professor Küng, what was your impression of the Pope's confession of guilt?

Prof. Küng: Yes, that he got himself up and got through it, to admit against the opposition within the curia that the church had made major mistakes and straying in history and to ask for forgiveness for it, which is a positive thing , But unfortunately you have to say that the whole confession was absolutely vague and nebulous. It was ambiguous and it was half-hearted and without consequences.

Heinlein: What points from church history should the Pope have named specifically?

Prof. Küng: That was said again and again, even in the reports on television and so on, but he didn't even mention the words, for example the west-east schism, the Reformation, the heretic and witch burning. The word Inquisition did not appear either. Not even the Holocaust was mentioned. It was also clear that names like Luther, Galileo or Bruno and so on did not appear there. Instead, only general phrases and formulas were heard, as might be done in a Sunday service in a Catholic church anyway.

Heinlein: But the Pope, Professor Küng, has given the victims of the Catholic Church a hand for reconciliation. That is no doubt certain. This is a remarkable gesture, considering the behavior of its predecessors over a period of 2000 years.

Prof. Küng: If you are affected yourself, you have heard little about this hand of reconciliation. But that's not so terribly important. It would be nice if, for example, instead of just complaining in general that women were humiliated, if he was not responsible for the fact that no women were ordained as pastors at all, he was responsible for the fact that the pill was still prohibited. It would also be nice if, for example, in the question of the split of the church not only were the others always asked to discuss the papacy, but if he finally came down from his absolutism and realized the collegiality decided by the Council. These are all examples, words everywhere, no actions.

Heinlein: Aren't you expecting too much from a Catholic head of the church? Isn't it rather the gesture that counts, Professor Küng, and less the words?

Prof. Küng: Many Catholics and bishops, above all, are always satisfied with gestures, but this cannot be accepted in such a serious time as today. On the other hand, when I hear from the official Catholic side that the number of new priests and candidates for priests in all German dioceses has dropped to a low level, one cannot continue to adhere to the Celibacy Law without error. When you see that the number of young people involved in church and regular church visits has declined by two thirds since 1960, as well as the number of marriages, baptisms and so on, the situation is serious. Then you will not improve the situation with gestures.

Heinlein: What purpose do you suppose behind yesterday's confession of Pope John Paul II?

Prof. Küng: I do believe that the Pope means that personally. A confession of sins must be made. He is very inclined to make dramatic external gestures anyway. He thought that would finally get the charges off the table. But as long as he doesn't call things by name and doesn't say clearly that this has happened and we want to do it differently, these questions will keep coming up. The Pope continues to be the main obstacle to church division. It is of no use if you ask for forgiveness in general terms, without calling the Reformation or even Martin Luther or even rehabilitating him.

Heinlein: Is the Pope's confession of guilt at least a signal that the Catholic Church is opening up towards more tolerance?

Prof. Küng: Yes, I would say it is a signal. You can see at least once that you made mistakes, or of course you knew that, but no Pope ever said it so clearly. But one would naturally have expected that Cardinal Ratzinger, who continues to embody and practice the Inquisition in the Catholic Church, would not generally promise, for example, against two theologians in Augsburg who were not given chairs, that it was just in the name errors of faith and morality have been made, methods have been used that do not conform to the gospel. Ratzinger still practices these methods.

Heinlein: You briefly mentioned the Pope's infallibility. Has the Pope, yesterday's confession of guilt, moved a little way from this dogma?

Prof. Küng: Yes, this is only factually so that, of course, every reasonable person wonders if you have to admit so many wrongdoings, aberrations, where is the infallibility? But the Pope pulls out of the noose, insofar as he does not reveal at any point that the Church itself is guilty. They are always members of the Church, they are some Catholics. Even the Holocaust is the most terrible crime, which anti-Judaism has created in Christian churches through the centuries. It is not mentioned, and there is only talk of some who have missed it. That Pius XII. Was silent about this epochal crime that he did not excommunicate those responsible and so on, all remains unsaid.

Heinlein: A very short question at the end, Professor Küng: You yourself are under the spell of the Vatican through the withdrawal of your church teaching license. Do you hope that the Pope will treat his critics more graciously after yesterday's Sunday?

Prof. Küng: Yes, never give up the belief that there are little miracles in the Church. But frankly, it is less important to me than that the Church would finally move back to the course of the second Vatican Council. We are in a nave that has been driven on sand, and it does not matter that much whether one or the other theologian - there is a completely different series - is rehabilitated or not, although of course I am happy would be if I only experienced it during my lifetime and not like Galileo only 300 years after death.

Heinlein: The Pope's Mea Culpa yesterday in the Vatican. The Tübingen reform theologian Professor Hans Küng on this morning on Deutschlandfunk. - Mr. Küng, thank you for this interview and goodbye!